

House Republican Press Release

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Representative Urban to Address National Legislative Conference



On Tuesday, August 16, State Representative Diana Urban, R-North Stonington, will address the National Conference of State Legislatures' (NCSL) annual meeting in Seattle, Washington. She will address the conference on how legislators can successfully introduce state programs to benefit small businesses and

microenterprise.

NCSL, founded in 1975, is a bipartisan organization that serves the legislators and staffs of the nation's 50 states, its commonwealths and territories. NCSL provides research, technical assistance and opportunities for policymakers to exchange ideas on the most pressing state issues.

"Bringing my message to the NCSL about the importance of microenterprise and small business in our economy is very exciting," said Rep. Urban, who serves on the Legislature's Commerce Committee. "With the dislocations caused by outsourced and off-shoring, it is imperative that our states focus on backfilling the economy by actively supporting small business and microenterprise."

In July 2004, National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO) honored Rep. Urban for serving as an effective advocate for the business community as a member of the General Assembly. The organization bestowed the first annual Diana Urban Award (which is named in perpetuity for her).

Addressing needs of the small business community has been a priority throughout Rep. Urban's tenure in the General Assembly. In 2003, she established the Small Business Advocacy Task Force, which is designed to address issues for small businesses in Southeastern Connecticut. That year, she also introduced two initiatives passed into law that came about as recommendations of the task force. One initiative extends eligibility for the Municipal Employees Health Insurance Program (MEHIP) to small employers with 50 or less employees, including the self-employed, and all nonprofits, not just those contracting with the state.

The small business advocacy task force will host state Comptroller Nancy Wyman on September 21 at Seaman's Inn in Mystic. Wyman will address MEHIP and other health insurance issues affecting small businesses.

The second 2003 initiative made it possible for the Community Economic Development Fund (CEDF) to help low and moderate income entrepreneurs with loans and technical assistance to start or grow microenterprises in all of Connecticut's 169 towns. Previously, CEDF was restricted to helping people who lived exclusively in a Targeted or Public Investment Community.